

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS

1 1. A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:
2 a first member defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor; and
3 a second member positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during
4 introduction to a surgical site and coupled to the first member such that relative motion
5 between the members deploys the tissue anchor from the region.

1 2. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first member includes an
2 applicator, and the second member includes a flexor, the members being coupled by
3 engagement of the flexor and the applicator.

1 3. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 2 wherein the applicator includes a
2 straight portion and a ramped portion.

1 4. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 2 wherein the applicator includes a first
2 end portion fixed to the first member, and a second end portion extending into the region to
3 engage the tissue anchor.

1 5. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 2 wherein the applicator comprises a
2 spring.

1 6. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 2 wherein the applicator is configured to
2 move laterally to a direction of relative motion between the members.

1 7. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 2 wherein the flexor comprises a pin
2 coupled to the second member for movement therewith relative to the applicator.

1 8. The tissue anchor of claim 7 wherein the first member defines an opening for
2 receiving the pin.

1 9. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the first member includes first
2 and second distal prongs defining the region therebetween.

1 10. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 9 wherein the prongs each define
2 arcuate surfaces for receiving the tissue anchor.

1 11. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 wherein the second member comprises
2 a tubular element substantially surrounding the first member.

12. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 further comprising a contact extending between the first and second members, actuation of the contact causing relative motion between the first member and the second member.

13. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 12 wherein the contact is fixed to the second member.

14. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 13 wherein the first member defines a slot for receiving at least a portion of the contact.

15. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 further comprising a handle.

16. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 14 further comprising a coupling between the handle and the first member preventing relative rotation therebetween.

17. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 1 further including means for applying a lateral force to the tissue anchor.

18. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 17 wherein the means includes an applicator and a flexor for flexing the applicator.

19. A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:
a first member including an applicator and defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor, the applicator configured to move laterally to deploy the tissue anchor from the region;

a second member including a flexor and positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during introduction to a surgical site, the members being coupled by engagement of the flexor and the applicator such that relative motion between the members causes the applicator to move laterally to deploy the tissue anchor from the region.

20. An anchor and tool assembly, comprising:
a tissue anchor;
a first member receiving the tissue anchor; and
a second member positioned to substantially cover the tissue anchor during introduction to a surgical site and coupled to the first member such that relative motion between the members deploys the tissue anchor from the first member.

21. A tissue anchor insertion tool comprising:

a member defining a region configured to receive a tissue anchor to deliver the tissue anchor to an insertion site; the member including an applicator configured to move laterally to deploy the anchor from the region.

22. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 21 further comprising a movable element coupled to the member for movement relative to the member between an extended position and a retracted position, the movable element substantially covering the tissue anchor when in the extended position, and substantially uncovering the tissue anchor when in the retracted position.

23. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 22 wherein the movable element includes a flexor coupled to the applicator to laterally move the application upon axial movement of the movable element.

24. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 23 wherein the applicator includes a straight portion permitting movement of the flexor relative to the applicator without lateral movement of the applicator.

25. The tissue anchor insertion tool of claim 23 wherein the applicator includes a ramped portion, wherein movement of the flexor along the ramped portion laterally deflects the applicator.

26. A method comprising:
providing an insertion tool including first and second members coupled for relative motion;

inserting a tissue anchor into tissue using the insertion tool, the tissue anchor being mounted to the first member and substantially covered by the second member during insertion into tissue; and

relatively moving the first and second members to deploy the tissue anchor from the first member.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving comprises proximally moving the second member relative to the first member.

28. The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving uncovers the tissue anchor.

1 29. The method of claim 26 wherein the step of relatively moving deploys the tissue
2 anchor by moving an applicator laterally to engage the tissue anchor.

1 30. The method of claim 29 wherein engaging the tissue anchor rotates the tissue
2 anchor.

1 31. An arthroscopic method comprising:
2 inserting a tissue anchor into tissue; and
3 moving an applicator laterally to rotate the tissue anchor during deployment of the
4 tissue anchor into tissue.

1 32. The method of claim 31 further comprising substantially covering the tissue
2 anchor during insertion of the tissue anchor into tissue.